

# Statewide Family Support Center NEWSLETTER

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DECEMBER '05 – JANUARY '06



*Serving Kentucky's Families  
with Children Who are Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing*

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Click on "Family Information"

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The SFSC is part of the Kentucky School for the Deaf Outreach Services and the Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness, components of the Kentucky Department of Education.

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## COCHLEAR IMPLANTS, HEARING AIDS, and FM SYSTEMS

*This issue of the SFSC Newsletter continues our series of various topics important to families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. If you would like additional copies of this issue or any of the past issues, feel free to contact us at the Statewide Family Support Center. For those who have access to the Internet, you can download copies of any of our Newsletters at [www.ksd.k12.ky.us](http://www.ksd.k12.ky.us). After you enter the website, click on the "Family Information" button and then click to either open the current SFSC Newsletter or open any of the archived newsletters.*

*We encourage and welcome feedback on any of our newsletters, resources, and programs for families. Let us know what we're doing that helps you and what you're not so happy with. If there are topics or resources that we have not yet addressed for you, let us know that, too. We wish you and your family the peace, joy, and love of this special holiday season. We look forward to hearing from you!*

*Pat and Cathy*



### COCHLEAR IMPLANTS FOR BABIES and CHILDREN

Christi Bailey, Kentucky School for the Deaf

#### WHAT IS A COCHLEAR IMPLANT?

According to the FDA, "A cochlear implant is an implanted hearing device, designed to provide useful hearing sensations to a person with severe to profound nerve deafness by electronically stimulating nerves inside the inner ear."



#### DOES A COCHLEAR IMPLANT "CURE" DEAFNESS?

No, a child who gets a cochlear implant has not been cured of their hearing loss and does not hear like others who do not have a hearing loss. At best, a person with a cochlear implant stills functions like a hard of hearing person.

#### WHAT CAN A COCHLEAR IMPLANT DO FOR A CHILD?

The range of communication outcomes for a child who gets a

cochlear implant(s) is quite varied and depends on many, many factors. According to the FDA, October 2004, "there are those who receive no hearing benefit at all and those who have near normal hearing and speech." Most people fall somewhere in between. To receive the maximum benefit possible from an implant requires an **intensive** amount of therapy and work.

#### CAN ANYONE TELL YOU EXACTLY HOW WELL YOUR CHILD WILL DO WITH A COCHLEAR IMPLANT?



No, there are not any tests that can precisely identify your child's outcome. Children, who lose their hearing after they have developed speech and language skills and have not been deaf for a long period of time, typically achieve near normal speech and hearing. Children who are born deaf who progress the farthest, are usually those who are implanted at a young age, have no other disabilities and who receive **intensive, aggressive** and regular

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## Cochlear Implants...

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therapy from a provider who is trained and experienced in dealing with cochlear implants. Their families are typically able to carry over therapy techniques into their daily routine.

### HOW DO YOU GET A COCHLEAR IMPLANT?

A family cannot just decide they want one for their child and get it. A child must go through a candidacy evaluation, and if approved, go through surgery to implant the device. Then the most critical part of getting an implant is participating in the *intensive* and *aggressive* therapy.



### WHO DOES THE CANDIDACY EVALUATION?

A hospital or doctor's office that does implant surgery will have a cochlear implant team which should consist of doctors, audiologists, speech and language therapists, a social worker, and very importantly someone from early intervention services or from the child's school. A very conscientious and thorough team will also include a member of the deaf community.



### WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO BE A CANDIDATE?

For medical approval a child must be one year of age or older, unless approved by the FDA; have tried hearing aids to no benefit; have no medical reasons why they cannot have surgery; and have a cochlea. If a child is approved medically the rest of the team will look at other factors and the entire team will decide whether or not they feel the child is an appropriate candidate.

### WHAT FACTORS OTHER THAN MEDICAL ONES DO A COCHLEAR IMPLANT TEAM LOOK FOR?

This varies by different implant teams but overall they are looking to see if other disabilities exist, if the child can participate in the intensive and aggressive therapy required, the family is committed to this therapy, there are providers available who are trained and experienced in providing these therapies, that a strong school program is available, and that the family has realistic expectations of the outcome.



## WHAT ARE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS?

This is different for every child depending on circumstances and should be discussed in depth with implant team members. A family who thinks the surgery is going to make everything better and their child will immediately start talking is not being realistic. An implant is not a cure and to get the most out of an implant requires a huge amount of time and effort on the part of the family.

### TIPS FOR FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Communicate often with your child's therapists; learn how to do therapy activities in the home in a natural way; share this information with other family members; keep information in a notebook or some organized way; give permission for your child's teacher and therapist to communicate about your child's program & encourage them to communicate



### ISSUES THAT FAMILIES MUST ADDRESS WITH THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Involve your child's early intervention provider or teacher in the candidacy process; work with teachers and providers to get the most information possible for programming; inform teachers and providers when your child gets a new program; coordinate goals and objectives between private therapy staff and school staff

### RESOURCES

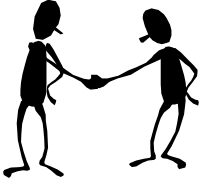
- 1) The following are companies that make different brands of cochlear implants. Contact them for more information about their devices.
  - Cochlear Americas  
400 Inverness Drive Suite 400  
Englewood, CO 80112  
303 790-9010  
[www.cochlear.com](http://www.cochlear.com)
  - Advanced Bionics  
Mann Biomedical Park  
25129 Rye Canyon Loop  
Valencia, CA.91355  
800678-575  
[www.bionicear.com](http://www.bionicear.com)



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## Cochlear Implants...

*continued from Page 2*



- Med-El  
222 East Highway 54  
Beta Building Suite 180  
Durham, NC 27713  
888 633-3524  
[www.medel.com](http://www.medel.com)

2) These are a few of the many websites with CI information and resources.

- **Cochlear Implants: Navigating a Forest of Information ... One Tree at a Time** This is a page from the Cochlear Implant Education Center at Gallaudet University, available at: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/KidsWorldDeafNet/e-docs/CI/index.html>. They offer resources and information on many different issues related to cochlear implants.
- **Cochlear Implant Myths & Realities** This is a page from the Listen-Up website available at <http://www.listen-up.org/ci/ci-myths.htm>. They list a variety of MYTHS often heard about cochlear implants and give the REALITY perspective of those concerns.
- **Cochlear Implants** This is the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website available at: <http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/cochlear/>. The purpose of this website is to describe cochlear implants, link to FDA-approved implants, tell the benefits and risks of cochlear implants, and provide news about cochlear implant recalls and safety issues. You can find information here too on what educators of implant users need to know, what happens before, during and after surgery, and where to report problems.

3) There are a lot of books, CDs, and videos about cochlear implants. To find out how to borrow and/or purchase these, contact:

- the Kentucky School for the Deaf Consultant for your area, (*see Page 6*)
- any of the cochlear implant centers that serve Kentucky, (*see list below*)
- the Statewide Family Support Center Lending Library,
- the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Lending Library

4) The following are Cochlear Implant programs serving the state of Kentucky:

- **Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Ctr.**  
3333 Burnett Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH.45229  
513 636-4263  
<http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/svc/alpha/c/cochlear/>
- **Heuser Hearing Institute**  
111 East KY Ave.  
Louisville, KY 40203  
502 515-3320  
<http://www.thehearinginstitute.org/index.php3?page=home.ext>
- **Lexington Hearing and Speech Center**  
162 N Ashland  
Lexington, KY 40502  
859 268-4545  
<http://www.lhscky.org/>
- **River City ENT**  
Dr. Joseph Touma  
1616 13th Avenue Suite 100  
Huntington, WV 25701  
304 522-8800
- **Riley Hospital for Children**  
Indianapolis, IN  
800 248-1199
- **Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center**  
1114 19th Avenue South  
Nashville, Tennessee 37212  
615-936-5001  
<http://www.vanderbiltbillwilkersoncenter.com/dhss.html>



## HEARING AIDS... The Basics

*The following information is from the "SKI-HI Curriculum"(2004) chapter, Hearing Aids, pages 385-490, written by Rhonda Condie.*

The "good news" for families, early on, is that there is a tremendous amount of new hearing aid technology to support excellent hearing aid fittings for children with hearing loss. The "challenging news" is that there is a lot of new hearing aid technology to learn about. Parents can make the best informed decisions when they have access to a pediatric audiologist and a "parent advisor" who can help explain all of the hearing aid information. Also, it is helpful to have access to a hearing aid loaner bank for a trial hearing aid fitting.

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## HEARING AIDS... *continued from Page 3*

In order to best understand hearing aids, parents should have basic information on how the ear works as well as the cause (if possible) and degree of their child's hearing loss. If your child's audiologist, teacher, or speech therapist do not have this information for you, feel free to contact the KSD Statewide Family Support Center for recommended articles, books, and other resources.

The **FIRST STEP** in obtaining a properly fitted hearing aid is to obtain medical clearance. Federal law regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration states that all children must have medical clearance from a licensed physician prior to being fit with hearing aids. After that, the actual fitting begins and is based on the child's audiogram.



Families and professionals who work with young children have to remember that the testing process is difficult and that getting an accurate picture of a baby's hearing ability takes frequent and repeated testing. The hearing aid selection and setting are based on the test results and must be monitored in order to give the baby/toddler the most appropriate amplification. The audiologist might have to try several different kinds of hearing aids before deciding which best fits the child's needs.

### KINDS of HEARING AIDS

The two most common types of hearing aids today are behind-the-ear (BTE) and custom hearing aids. Custom hearing aids come in

#### Behind-the-Ear

different sizes: in-the-ear (ITE), in-the-canal (ITC), and completely-in-the-canal (CIC). The larger custom hearing aids, like the ITE, can house more powerful components than the smaller custom aids. Because a child's ear grows and changes shape rapidly, custom hearing aids would have to be replaced frequently. Therefore, most babies and children are fitted with BTE aids and, when

#### Custom Hearing Aid

appropriate, custom aids are fitted when the child is older.

Current technology has made it so that many babies and children today are fitted with digital hearing aids instead of the more standard analog hearing aids of a few years ago. Digital hearing aids are unique in that they have a small computer chip inside that processes the sound digitally. This enables the sound to be altered in a multitude of ways to meet the very specific hearing loss of each child.

The variety of special features available for hearing aids is large. Families with children who are experiencing difficulties with hearing aids need to become familiar with the different options, ask a lot of questions, and work closely with their child's audiologist and teachers.

### PURCHASING HEARING AIDS

As a consumer purchasing hearing aids, families need to ask about certain service and product guarantees. It is a good idea to get these guarantees in writing, perhaps in a contract form, from the dispensing audiologist.

- Do they offer a 30-day trial period?
- If returned within the 30-day trial period, what is the exact refund?
- How much do follow-up office visits cost?
- What is the length of the repair, loss, and/or damage warranty?
- Do they provide loaner hearing aids when this one is sent in for repairs?

Earmolds will need to be replaced frequently, depending on how fast your child is growing. Most often, feedback (squealing) is caused by an earmold that doesn't fit correctly. Ask your audiologist who will be making new earmolds when needed.

Batteries are required for almost all hearing aids. Often, they can be purchased in a local drug store and/or discount store. Talk with your audiologist to find out where inexpensive (and good) batteries are found.

The Kentucky Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs (CCSHCN) is available to families throughout the state. They offer services to help with the entire process of testing, fitting, purchasing, and repairing hearing aids for children, birth to age 21. To find the clinic nearest to you, contact:

*Continued on Page 5*



## Hearing Aids...

*continued from Page 4*

Commission for Children with Special

Health Care Needs

982 Eastern Parkway,

Louisville KY 40217

Phone (800) 232-1160 or (502) 595-4459

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT** is essential for any child to get maximum benefit from any kind of amplification, including hearing aids.

One area that is sometimes

challenging is teaching the

child to accept and wear the

aids for all waking hours. There

are several approaches to

accomplishing this goal. Your

audiologist, parent advisor, and/or teacher

should have specific resources to help. Most

families are successful when they follow the

concept that "not wearing the hearing aids is not

an option." The young child cannot decide on

their own to wear or not to wear them. Some

children readily accept their new hearing aids.

Others struggle with them. Be loving, but be firm.

Gradually increase the amount of time you

require your child to wear the hearing aids each

day and each week. Praise them for success!

Families must also learn how to take care of

the hearing aids. Basically, families must check

the hearing aids on a daily basis. There are simple

steps to follow and equipment that will help.

Again, the audiologist and other service providers

will have information and supplies to help with this

area. One important concept is for families to

starting teaching the child to accept responsibility

for taking care of the aids at a young age.

Finally, families are the key to the child

learning to listen with their new amplification.

Some people think that a hearing aid is simply put

on the child and the child magically becomes

"hearing." That is NOT correct. There is a slow,

but sure process that a child must go through to

learn how to make sense out of all the new

sounds going into their ears. If your audiologist,

service provider or teacher do not know how to

teach a child to listen (auditory therapy), AND

how to teach the family what to do, it is vital for

the family to find resources and information.

Contact the Statewide Family Support Center

and/or Kentucky School for the Deaf Outreach

Consultants for help.



## What is an FM System?

In order to help your child hear speech better in noise, a personal FM system may be appropriate. While hearing aids are of great benefit to those with hearing loss, there are some listening situations with background noise that create a challenge that hearing aids alone cannot meet. This is especially true in classrooms where the background noises of children talking, shuffling about, etc., make it especially difficult for the child to hear the teacher's voice.

A personal FM system can be coupled with the child's hearing aids to reduce the impact of background noise. The teacher wears a small microphone and transmitter. The speech signal is sent by FM radio waves to the receiver worn by the child. The receiver attaches to the hearing aid in different ways, depending on the make and model of the FM system. When the teacher's microphone is worn correctly (within 6-8 inches of the speaker's mouth), a nearly pure speech signal is sent to the child's receiver.



## PARENT-TO-PARENT LETTER

by Sarah New, Louisville

Our daughter had cochlear implant surgery at 21 months after using hearing aids from the age of two weeks. It was the right decision for her and I don't regret it for a second. After our daughter received her implant, I marveled at every accomplishment in her listening skills. When she responded to music with smiles, I knew she would enjoy it. I also knew that she could learn to recognize sounds such as sirens and car horns. When she responded to hearing her name, I knew that she could learn to understand spoken words. But those little milestones, as exciting as they were, didn't mean my daughter suddenly had "normal" hearing.

Our daughter is the only deaf person in the family. As a result, I've been placed in the position of teacher to all the relatives, most of whom have no idea what a Cochlear Implant (CI) is. Actually, I like those people best – it's the ones who think they know what the implant does who are really a



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## Parent-to-Parent Letter *continued from Page 5*

challenge! "Why doesn't her speech sound like the little boy I saw on the news?" Well, that's because she's not the little boy you saw on the news – she's Joanna! And it's not just the relatives who only see her a few times a year – it's the grandparents, too. If I ran an implant program I would require all family members who are close to the child to come to an educational session. Then maybe the grandparents, aunts and uncles would stop asking Mom and Dad when their precious little one will start talking.

We've all seen the stories about children who seemingly developed beautiful spoken language overnight. When I see those stories I'm reminded of the cartoon where a scientist has written the beginning of a complex equation on one side of a blackboard, the outcome on the other end and in the middle is the phrase "then a miracle occurs." Sometimes we have unrealistic expectations of the tools we've chosen and of our children. Media stories about kids with Cochlear Implants rarely, if ever, detail the hours of therapy required for a child to be able to make meaning of the sounds heard with the implant. And they never show that success may mean different things to different families.

It has been about 2½ years since our daughter's surgery. She has progressed more slowly than some children and more quickly than others. She uses spoken language in her preschool classroom and signs for her favorite snack as soon as I pick her up in the afternoon. She glides along the continuum of language, signing some words, speaking others and often doing both. CIs, hearing aids and FM systems are wonderful tools that help kids make more sense of the sounds around them but they don't make miracles. Regardless of the technology we choose or reject for our children what is important is having the support around them to encourage learning and communication. That's where the miracle happens.

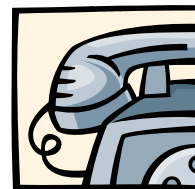


## THE STATEWIDE FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

The Statewide Family Support Center is one part of Kentucky School for the Deaf Outreach

Services. As mentioned in the previous articles, KSD's Outreach Services has (or can refer you to the appropriate program for) resources for related to Cochlear Implants, Hearing Aids, and FM Systems. The resources are available to families throughout the state regardless of where your child goes to school. You can contact Fran Hardin, Director at:

K.S.D. Outreach Services  
P.O. Box 27  
Danville, KY 42001  
859 239-7017v/tty  
fhardin@ksd.k12.ky.us



If you have Internet access, you can go to this website: [http://www.ksd.k12.ky.us/Outreach/regional\\_sites.htm](http://www.ksd.k12.ky.us/Outreach/regional_sites.htm). It will show a map of our state. Click on the name of the region which includes your county. This will take you to another page with the KSD Outreach Consultant's contact information.



## THE LISTENING CORNER

The following was written by Carol Zara, M.A., CCC/SLP, in *Cochlear Implants for Kids (Estabrooks, 1998)*

While developing functional use of auditory skills with the child, bear in mind the following acronym: **PARENTS**

- ☐ **P**atience. The child needs to learn how to use the sound that is now available. This however, will require modification of hearing aids over time. Parental feedback to the therapist is essential. Be patient.
- ☐ **A**ccess. Hearing aids and the cochlear implant gives the child access to the speech signal at audible levels, possibly for the first time. However, only through **consistent use of these devices** and **ongoing therapy** does this new hearing potential become functional.
- ☐ **R**elevance. Targets and activities must be selected that are relevant and interesting to the child. **Use spoken language** as the stimuli whenever possible. When using environmental sounds, select those that occur as a natural consequence of an activity.
- ☐ **E**xpectations. High, but realistic, expectations for your child are critical. We

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## The Listening Corner *continued from Page 6*

assume the child **can now hear!** We must provide many opportunities for the child to **hear** and **respond to speech**. Naturally occurring situations are the best means of stimulating listening and language learning. To develop these skills, we like to make the most of activities such as getting dressed and eating.

- **Nurture.** Provide an abundance of affection, remembering that this little person is a child first and a hearing aid or cochlear implant user second.
- **Time.** Learning to listen does not happen overnight. **Learning speech and language through listening is an ongoing process.** We need to be consistent.
- **Success.** With the energy and love parents put into this process, successful listening experiences will **become** an integral part of daily life.

Thanks for "listening" and I'll be "hear" next time!

Shelby Rutledge, Speech/Language Pathologist  
Lexington Hearing & Speech Center



## THE LITERACY CORNER

How can deaf or hard-of-hearing (DHH) children learn to spell if they cannot hear the individual sounds in a word? That is a question I hear a lot. There is no simple answer to this.



Many programs have been developed to help DHH children learn how to decode (sound out) words. Cued Speech and Visual Phonics are systems that use cues

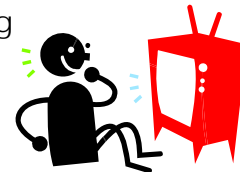
(handshapes) to represent the different sounds in the English language. One can then sound out a word using these cues to figure out how to spell a word.

You don't need to know this exact system to help your child decode words. With the help of the speech pathologists at my school, we have started creating our own cues to identify different sounds. For example, for the 'k' sound, we place our hand by our cheek, palm facing backwards. As we make the sound, we move the hand backwards. When helping students spell words, I

use the different movements to help them "hear" the sounds they cannot decipher.

You could also help them recognize the different mouth formations for the sounds. However, be aware that many sounds have the same mouth formations. For example, 'b' and 'p' and 'm' look the same on the mouth.

In order to practice for spelling tests, I used different techniques, all of which can be used at home. First, I videotape each child signing their spelling words. This is taken home and watched with the parents. You can ask your child's teacher to do this. I encourage the parents to pause after each word and practice spelling them. I recommend that they DO NOT sit their children in front of the television and expect them to learn on their own. Kids will just watch it as they do a movie, not use it as a tool for learning.



Children learn best when they have variety. You should have them practice writing and fingerspelling their spelling words. Additionally, have them practice using these other objects as well: magnetic letters, alphabet blocks, yarn, spaghetti, sand, and anything else that you can think of.

There is one important thing to remember and to emphasize to your children. When writing, do not get stressed out on spelling every word perfectly. Many children get in this trap and will only write using the words they know how to spell. Talk to your children about editing. We write down our thoughts, not worrying about spelling. When we are finished, we go back and check spelling. We don't want spelling difficulties to limit a child's written expression.

If you have any questions or comments that you would like addressed in future articles, please email me at [heidigas1@yahoo.com](mailto:heidigas1@yahoo.com).



**The American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC)**, a national parent group has moved:

ASDC

3820 Hartzdale Drive

Camp Hill, PA 17011

717-703-0073 or 1-866-895-4206

[ASDC1@aol.com](mailto:ASDC1@aol.com) [www.deafchildren.org](http://www.deafchildren.org)

## AROUND THE STATE



Mondays in **Danville** – Sign classes for families will begin on January 30<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 in Lee Hall. There is no registration fee for family members and there are different skill-level classes available. Childcare for families is also available, provided by the KSD PTCA. Contact Ina Price at 859-239-7017 for more information.



Tuesdays in **Northern Kentucky** – Family sign classes at River Ridge Elem. From 6:00-7:30, are open to any family with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Call Sue Frisbee for more information: 859-426-8036.



Tuesdays in **Bowling Green** – Sign classes will be at the Greenwood Mall Food Court on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, from 5:30-7:00.



Tuesdays in **Elizabethtown** – Sign classes will be on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, from 5:30-7:00 at Cici's Pizza on Dixie Highway.



Wednesdays in the **Owensboro area** – Family sign classes at Country Heights Elementary. From 5:30 to 7:00 are open to any family with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. 5:30 - 6:30 is the sign class and 6:30 to 7:00 is for parent support discussions. Call Heidi Givens for more information at (270) 852-7250 or email at [hgivens@daviess.k12.ky.us](mailto:hgivens@daviess.k12.ky.us)



Thursdays in **Northern Kentucky** – Sign classes for professionals will be at River Ridge Elem. from 3:45-4:45, open to any professionals working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Call Sue at the number above.



January 14, 12:00 – 2:00 **Danville area** Support Network for Families local group will meet in the SFSC meeting rooms in Lee Hall on KSD's campus.



January 16-20; **for any family in the state:** Person-Centered Communication: Teaching Receptive and Expressive Communication Skills to Children with Severe/Multiple Disabilities (Including Deaf-Blindness). For family members, overnight lodging at KSB is available at no cost; breakfast and lunch are provided and mileage is

reimbursed. Contact Diane Haynes for more information: 502-897-1583, ext. 279 or email her at [dhaynes@ksb.k12.ky.us](mailto:dhaynes@ksb.k12.ky.us).



January 20; **Upper Cumberland Co-op** There will be a regional meeting for staff working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students at the Laurel County Public Library in London; 10-noon.



January 21, the **Owensboro area** Support Network for Families will have their local chapter meeting at Ryan's Restaurant from 12:00 - 2:00. We will be discussing the needs of our local group.



January 24, **West Kentucky** Silent Dinner Sign Language Group will meet in Mayfield at the Majestic Family Restaurant (700 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St). Please contact Paula Humphreys to let her know you will attend. [PHumphre@ksd.k12.ky.us](mailto:PHumphre@ksd.k12.ky.us) or (270) 443-3055



January 28; **N.Ky SHHH:** 10:30, at the Campbell County Library in Newport, KY; VR Deaf/HH special counselor, Carol Leonhart, will be our speaker. Questions about Transitions, (school-to-work) are certain to be brought up with the increased focus on this area of rehabilitation services development in the making.



**Northern Kentucky** parent group will meet in January. The date/time have not been set. Please contact Cynthia Knight Jones for more information ([crickett@zoomtown.com](mailto:crickett@zoomtown.com)).

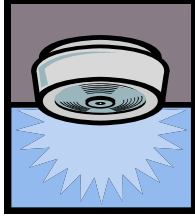
### HEADS UP:

- **CINCINNATI HEALTH FAIR** will be held on May 6<sup>th</sup>. The Key Note speaker will be Sue Thomas. Mark this date off for a hold and also join us in participation or setting up a booth to educate our community.
- The **FAMILY LEARNING VACATION** is back this year and scheduled for June 10, 2006 in Danville. Families with children of any age are welcome! Rooms will be available for the weekend on a first-come, first-served basis. Flyers and registration forms should go out in the mail in January.
- **DeaFestival '06** – Saturday, July 1, 2006, in Louisville. A full-day of FUN for the whole family!




## Visual Smoke Alarms Available to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing


Through a Federal Grant, The NACHI Foundation is able to offer free visual smoke alarms to the deaf and hard of hearing meeting certain financial requirements. The program is designed to offer protection to those who would otherwise have no protection. The alarms are free of cost and are simple to apply for. Go to this website for the application form: [www.safehousecampaign.com](http://www.safehousecampaign.com).



## Books by and for Families!

 Tabitha Weatherbee has published a book, "Tabbythat the Middle Cat". This is about a fat black and white cat that has an older sister and a younger brother. She feels she is always in trouble and deal with her feelings of unfairness and just being second best.

Tabitha moved to Kentucky and has three kids. She wrote this book for her middle daughter, Rachel, who is hard of hearing. You can order this book (\$15.50) from Author House Press. Congratulations, Tabitha!

 Corinne Cheatham is the mother of a 10 year old deaf child and author of the recently published book **She Doesn't Look Deaf**. Her book examines the emotions and struggles a parent goes through while raising a deaf child along with the services to get plugged into.

The book costs \$12.95 (paperback) and \$24.95 (hardback) and is available from Llumina Press, Ingram, and Baker & Taylor.



## College Day

KSD is hosting their annual College Day and inviting the families of both KSD students and public school students to attend: January 11<sup>th</sup> in Brady Hall's Multipurpose Room, from Noon til 3:00. College representatives from Gallaudet University (Washington DC), National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Rochester, NY), Eastern Kentucky University (Danville and Richmond, KY), Jefferson Community and Technical College (Louisville, KY), University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Bluegrass Community and

Technical College (Central KY). There will be a booth for Vocational Rehabilitation as well. This small size will ensure that you and your child will have maximum exposure to the university representatives and V. R. counselors.

Please be sure to let us know if you will need any accommodations in order to participate in this event. Interpreters will be available to assist with communication needs. RSVP for the KSD College Day so that we will have an accurate picture of how many students and parents will be attending. Stu Harper can be contacted via email at [sharper@ksd.k12.ky.us](mailto:sharper@ksd.k12.ky.us). Call him at 859-239-7017, ext. 2431 (V/TTY) if you have any questions or need additional information.



## PARENT-PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE

A special conference, just for families, is coming up very soon. The Parent-Professional Conference will be in Lexington at the Marriott Griffin Gate Hotel. It will run from Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 until noon on Sunday, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>.

They will have a wide variety of workshops for families. Some of the workshops are specifically related to the needs of families of deaf and hard of hearing kids: "Raising your Child in a Language-Rich Environment" by Christi Bailey and Kristen Howell (parent) AND "Beyond Hearing Aids" by Ed Schickel of SHHH. He will be demonstrating a large variety of assistive listening devices. Throughout the weekend there will be information on parent rights, ADHD, behavior, autism, blind/visually impaired needs, Medicaid, multiply-disabled children, and MORE!

Early registration is due by January 20<sup>th</sup> and is only \$35. per person. This includes all workshops and 4 meals. Scholarships are available by contacting: the Jefferson County PRC at 502-485-3346 or 502-485-3807.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The Statewide Family Support Center was not able to publish and mail this newsletter by the end of November as planned. Pat Bruce is on temporary medical leave. We hope to be back on schedule shortly. We apologize for any inconvenience and wish you a wonder-filled holiday season!



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## **STATEWIDE FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER NEWSLETTER November 2005**



*Serving Kentucky's Families with  
Children who are Deaf and Hard of  
Hearing*

**PO Box 27  
Danville, KY 40423**

The Statewide Family Support Center is located in Lee Hall on the campus of the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville. Families from across the state are welcome to call, visit, or email us with questions.

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